

## WHEN YOU ARE 15 TO 17

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

#### SAFETY

- ♥ AVOID the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
- ♥ TEST smoke detectors in your home and CHANGE the batteries twice a year when the time changes in the spring and fall.
- ♥ ALWAYS wear a seat belt correctly when riding in an automobile. IF you are DRIVING, INSIST your passengers wear seat belts. ALWAYS follow the speed limit. NEVER ride in a car if you suspect or know the driver has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.
- ♥ LEARN to swim and know the safety rules of water.
- ♥ PROTECT yourself from skin cancer by putting on sunscreen when outside for long periods of time. AVOID going to tanning salons.
- ♥ NEVER carry or use a weapon of any kind.
- ♥ LEARN techniques to protect yourself from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.
- ♥ ALWAYS wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, motorcycle, or a three or four wheeler.
- ♥ AVOID high noise levels, especially in music headsets.
- ♥ ALWAYS wear protective gear at work, when advised to do so, and FOLLOW safety procedures related to your job.
- ♥ IF YOU are experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, TELL your health-care provider, a responsible adult, or call the ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-752-6200 for help.

#### NUTRITION

- ♥ EAT three meals a day, choose a variety of healthy foods and eat meals with your family on a regular basis. WHEN you eat snacks, choose and prepare nutritious foods, such as fruit, raw vegetables, yogurt, cereal, or crackers. LIMIT eating high fat, low nutrient snacks, such as candy, chips, or soft drinks.
- ♥ USE Food Guide Pyramid to help plan meals and snacks.
- ♥ SELECT a nutritious meal from the school cafeteria or pack a balanced lunch to take from home.
- ♥ ACHIEVE and MAINTAIN a healthy weight.
- ♥ MANAGE weight through good eating habits and regular physical activity.
- ♥ TAKE a multi-vitamin containing Folic Acid daily.



#### HEALTHY TEETH

- ♥ CONTINUE to brush your teeth twice daily. FLOSS your teeth daily.
- ♥ WHEN playing sports, wear protective sports gear such as a mouth guard or face protector.
- ♥ SCHEDULE a dental visit every six months, unless your dentist recommends otherwise.
- ♥ DO NOT smoke, chew or use smokeless tobacco.

## MENTAL HEALTH

- ♥ TAKE on new challenges that will increase your self-confidence. SET reasonable and challenging goals.
- ♥ CONTINUE to develop your sense of identity and CONTINUE to learn about yourself (i.e., what is important to you, what you believe in, etc.).
- ♥ EXPLORE new roles without hurting yourself or others.
- ♥ LEARN to feel good about yourself through learning what your strengths are and listening to what good friends and valued adults say about you. TRUST your own feelings as well as listening to the ideas of good friends and valued adults.
- ♥ ACCEPT who you are and enjoy both the adult and the child in you.
- ♥ LEARN to recognize and deal with stress. SEEK help if you often feel angry, depressed, or hopeless.
- ♥ UNDERSTAND the importance of your religious and spiritual needs and try to fulfil them.

## SEXUALITY

- ♥ ASK your health care provider any questions you may have about body changes during puberty, including variations from individual to individual. GIRLS may have questions regarding menstruation.
- ♥ ASK your health care provider any questions you may have about birth control or sexually transmitted diseases.
- ♥ NOT HAVING SEX is the safest way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection/AIDS.
- ♥ LEARN about ways to say NO to sex. KNOW the concept of “COERCION”, which means tactics used to get a person to do something they do not want to do. These tactics include, PERSUASION (“I know you really want to...”), PRESSURE (“If you really loved me you would..”), MANIPULATION (“You’re the only one who understands me; I can’t live without you..”), BLACKMAIL (“If you don’t, I will...”), GUILT (“I took you out; you owe me”, I gave up friends, party, someone else for you..”), and PUT DOWNS (“No one else will ever want you...”)
- ♥ LEARN TECHNIQUES for being ASSERTIVE about sexual activity. USE statements like “When you \_\_\_\_\_, it makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_, or “I want you to \_\_\_\_\_ or I Will \_\_\_\_\_”. AVOID alcohol and drugs as these agents may be used to manipulate a person into sexual activity. AVOID situations that may lead to coercive attempts (example: being home alone with your boyfriend). SUGGEST alternatives (“Let’s go get pizza”), IDENTIFY consequences (“I could get pregnant”), or if necessary, LEAVE and WALK away. INDIVIDUALS have the right to REFUSE to engage in sexual activity or to END the activity at any time.
- ♥ IF you are engaging in sexual activity, including intercourse, ask your health care provider for an examination. DISCUSS methods of birth control and LEARN about SAFE SEX.